

# **NP Vital Vocabulary – By Teens for Teens –Martha Snyder**

## **Technology Use in the Classroom**

New Plymouth Middle School is a Title 1 school located in the southwest corner of Idaho. It serves a population of approximately 300 students in grades 6 – 8. Previously a sixth grade teacher, I am presently the eighth grade language arts teacher.

In what innovative ways has technology been implemented in my classroom? With grant funds, students interviewed patrons in the district for a video "Connection Journey" scrapbook. Patrons who were able to travel were videotaped at school. Those who could not travel were interviewed at home. We produced a videotape of the interviews. We mailed copies of this video history to each school district in Idaho. The project culminated in a rip roarin' community round-up, complete with demonstrations of pioneer skills, a chuck wagon, farrier, band and good food. The interview from each videotaped segment was then accessed by the freshmen in our district, and essays were written for a memory book.

Through a Big Sky program, students studied water usage within individual homes. Students reported their results to university students and it was compiled with data collected from students in the northwest. From personal experience, they noted the differences in water usage during a flu epidemic and laughed a bit, or not at all. Class discussions led to the task of computing the average water usage per individual, per 1,000 individuals, then for a million people. This led to class discussions on the impact smaller toilet tanks would make on water usage. The most difficult task was measuring the water usage in each flush. They needed to problem solve once again.

In our eighth grade projects class, an integrated language arts, math and science class, students studied local water conditions. After field trips to the Payette River, students developed spreadsheets reporting their results. They produced PowerPoint projects, complete with graphics and transitions, and presented these projects to their classmates.

Teaching eighth graders can be a challenge. To eliminate some of the "large group" behavioral challenges, my classroom often has a "center" configuration, with six learning activities happening at one time. I have videotaped lessons at home, and placed the tape at a classroom TV/video station for listening/viewing by students during class. Last year I supervised a student teacher and it was exciting to see the improvement over time in her presentation skills. Video allows you to present the same material to each class. There is no forgetting to mention certain information.

My classroom is equipped with a Smart Board and Classroom Performance System. To break up the mundane and engage students, I have written review and game-format lessons for my students. Having no district-wide curriculum coordinator, teachers find it time effective to share resources. This happens within grade levels, and also between grade levels. Using technology has become an integral part of teaching.

## How Has the Use of Technology Impacted Student Performance?

With the "Connection Journey," students learned **interviewing skills**. They learned to **organize** their thoughts and to **work cooperatively** in groups. They learned **basic camera skills**. Students learned that the individual being interviewed **was more important to the project than they were**. Students discovered that the history of the local area was as interesting as the historical fiction they read. Anecdotally, students were more excited to come to school when video was included in lesson presentation. Video captures student attention and enhances participation. Research has shown that the learning process is improved if the visuals and instructional design of courses expand students' interest and self-discovery through a high level of interactivity.

With the water usage project, students learned **organizational skills**. After much frustration, they learned to **manipulate data** in a spreadsheet. Manipulating data is a skill they will use in their future educational endeavors. Students discovered the importance **of accuracy** in transferring data to a spreadsheet the first time, not on the second or third try. Students communicated with students in the northwest and learned to **express themselves succinctly**. With the Payette River SITE projects, students discovered that **their actions can impact** the water quality of an area. They admitted that we are all shepherds of natural resources, and discussed steps that could be taken to ensure acceptable water quality for future generations. They also **debated** the problems encountered with their suggested solutions. Students learned the **basics of powerful presentations** to best depict their ideas to their classmates. They **cooperated** within their groups; the success of the project was imminent!

Students came to understand that they receive individual attention that might not be forthcoming without the videotaped lessons in the classroom. There are **compromises** to be made in every classroom; the above is a life skill, not necessarily a skill that can be assessed in the multiple choice format. Technology promotes **problem solving skills**. With strong problem solving skills, students discover that they do have "power". Success breeds success.

We have implemented our infrared response system, The Classroom Performance System, throughout the middle school. We are presently collecting data on trends of beginning-of-the-year and end-of-the-year scores on the ISAT. We need **verification** that the utilization of CPS and regular review is fostering student learning and improving scores. We are anticipating that we will have **hard-core data** within three years. Anecdotally we know that students are more willing to respond to material presented to them via in a quiz show atmosphere.

## **Enhancing Classroom Performance**

The NP Vital Vocabulary – by Teens for Teens project has been developed to support and enhance New Plymouth Middle School's core curriculum. Our goal is to use new and existing technology to improve student achievement in grades seven and eight. We will be producing and distributing a vocabulary videotape to middle schools in the state of Idaho. In reviewing ISAT results, one area of continued concern is vocabulary mastery. Last fall I purchased the only set of five vocabulary videos I could locate. The students loved them. That statement is meant to include the challenged learner as well as the gifted. We had five weeks of students laughing and learning. However, we need additional tapes. I have the technical experience required to produce video tapes. With this project we will be meeting a need, learning video making skills, mastering vocabulary, and proving how creative we can really be!

We will be covering vocabulary presented on the ISAT and PSAT. While the challenged learned might not be expected to be familiar with many of these words, I found that the students enjoyed having unfamiliar words in their repertoire. We now have a "loquacious Will" and an "eccentric Mrs. Snyder". What is the best way to depict the meaning of abhorred? What about diaphanous? Students will need to have mastered the definitions to deal with the nuances of the words. They will learn to draw a story board, arrange props, lighting, and dialogue. They must master the operation of the camera. Should we include background music? Will it distract from the message? Students will be problem solvers.

The students will need to become critical reviewers of the videos we have seen this year. What ideas could have improved the videos? We cannot go to Hawaii or New Zealand or Africa. We can scan photographs. Adobe Premier is an excellent software program for processing video. Students will be able to dance, sing and perform ridiculous stunts, all without profanity. When merging tracks, we can make it seem as though the students are actually in the above locations. Students will become eager learners.

The students will need to learn organizational skills and work cooperatively in groups. Time management will be essential to the success of the project. Students must be willing to video before school and after school. Working with video is time consuming, but it is also exciting. This is a skill students can use as adults with family, friends, and in their careers. This might be a first step toward a career as a videographer or graphic artist. It will also help students become more critical consumers of media and enhance awareness of the "tricks of the trade" of commercials, television and film. But, most of all, there is the delight of producing a work you are proud of producing.

Making a vocabulary video will get creative juices flowing. The joy of creating quality work is contagious. NP Vital Vocabulary – by Teens for Teens will be one tool in our portfolios.

## **Budget Narrative – NP Vivid Vocabulary – by Teens for Teens**

### **Salaries and Benefits**

Substitute teachers – hired to cover classes for local on-location trips with small groups, an all day video workshop, and during the final stages of revision, editing and compilation of the DVD/VHS tape for publishing

Benefits – per state and district policies for above substitute teachers

### **Contractual Agreements**

On-site one day video workshop for a core group of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, two classroom teachers and two classroom aides. Vendor of choice will be Mike Clabby from Coeur d'Alene.

"We Make Tapes and Discs" – duplication of DVDs/VHS tapes to be sent to districts in the state of Idaho.

### **Materials and Supplies**

Consumables for taping and floodlight  
Student classroom supplies designated to the grant  
Video/audio cords

### **Capital Objects**

Bogen/Manfrotto tripod  
ARRI floodlight  
floodlight stand  
chromakey background  
multimedia Dell or MPC computer  
Sony GY-DV300U/REM video camera  
roll around storage cart with lock

### **Plan for Continued Support of the Project**

District personnel will be responsible for daily service and support of all the programs and all technologies during the initial integration year as well as all subsequent years of usage. Identifiable impacts on student learning will drive continued support and usage of these tools.

**Qwest Foundation for Education Grant Expenditure Plan  
(Standard IFARMS Budget Format)**

Activity	100	200	300	400	500	<b>TOTAL</b>
	Salaries	Benefits	Contractual Agreements	Materials and Supplies	Capital Objects	
1. On-site video workshop	350.00	30.00				380.00
2. Location trips/teacher compilation	200.00	18.00				218.00
3. On-site video workshop for students, teacher, aides			1000.00			1000.00
4. "We Make Tapes & Discs DVD/VHS duplication			700.00			700.00
5. Consumables for taping/lights/students				400.00		400.00
6. Audio/Video cords				200.00		200.00
7. Bogen/Manfrotto tripod					250.00	250.00
8. ARRI floodlight					300.00	300.00
9. Floodlight stand					100.00	100.00
10. Chromakey screen					325.00	325.00
11. Multimedia computer					2100.00	2100.00
12. Sony video camera					2100.00	2100.00
13. Tall storage cart with lock					450.00	450.00
14. Adobe Premier software (education pricing)					250.00	250.00
15. 19" flat screen TV					450.00	450.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	550.00	48.00	1700.00	600.00	6325.00	9223.00